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MARION RICHARDSON MEMORIAL EXHIBITION

THE ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN

MARION RICHARDSON, who died in November 1946, was the outstanding pioneer of the modern approach to the teaching of art in this country.

The merit of her work at Dudley High School was first recognised by Roger Fry in 1919. Later, after some years as tutor to the art students training as teachers at the London Day Training College, she became an Art Inspector for the London County Council. Her work in the schools of London was known throughout the educational field in this country and overseas.

The examples shown here are by young people who were taught by Marion Richardson, or by teachers trained by her, or by teachers who came to understand her approach through her visits to their schools. This approach is described in her books *Writing and Writing Patterns* and *Art and the Child*. In a school magazine of 1935, she expressed it in the following words: "The teaching (at . . .) has encouraged the children to wait for the mental image before beginning to paint, and then to express it as faithfully as they can. This image-making is the child's natural approach to painting, and his certain means of distinguishing between the drawing which he will use for scientific purposes, and the drawing which is his art. In a scientific drawing every object is important for its own sake, and every fact will take its place in a literally truthful whole. But the artist is concerned with the relationships between things and never with things apart from these relationships. It is the unity of the idea that is always his chief concern. In its very nature the mental image is unified and complete, and visualising is the child's own way of arriving through emotion at the synthesis that the mature artist reaches by more complex means. Gradually and in the measure of their gifts the children will gain the power of using

direct observation in their work, and of selecting from the richness and beauty of their surroundings whatever is relevant to the artistic idea. And the beauty or ugliness of their pictures will depend upon their sense of harmony and coherence and not upon their success or failure to imitate natural beauty.

Where does technical training come in such a scheme as this? No one can fail to see the danger of teaching a technique that may be divorced from the child's own vision. Idea and expression are in their essence one. The idea that is completely secure will find its own expression for there is never an alternative form. The teacher's effort will be to help the child to find the shapes and colours that match his vision and above all perhaps to provide so rich a variety of materials and such wide and stimulating opportunities for using them that the young artist will make his own discoveries and come ever nearer and nearer to seeing his vision in terms of material."

There is much discussion nowadays of the psychological and therapeutic value of art. Marion Richardson was fully aware of this aspect of art teaching, but she never gave it first place, or lost her aesthetic standards in pursuit of these ideas. What was important to her was that children should grow up with a sincere love of the arts, and she believed that the practice of the arts in youth is the surest way to this end.

This Exhibition consists of a selection from the MARION RICHARDSON MEMORIAL EXHIBITION which was organised by the Society for Education in Art and held at the Victoria and Albert Museum during the autumn of 1948. *It has been arranged by Miss Kathleen Richardson on behalf of the Arts Council.*

		Age
1. Evening Newspaper	*Doris Richards*	15
2. Back Gardens	*M. Lowe*	15
3. Basket of Flowers	*Margery Pasfield*	13
4. Reading in Bed	*Oliven Johnson*	15
5. Little Fruit Shop	*Marjorie Burchill*	12
6. Tram	*Margery Abbis*	16
7. In The Park. / Bathing The Baby	*Hilda Francis*	12
8. Bird In a Nest	*C. Lissmore*	17
9. Two Ladies	*Lily Heffer*	11
10. Field of the Cloth of Gold	*David Sturdy*	9
11. The Train	*Andrew Martindale*	12
12. A Mother's Love	*Joan Morecroft*	13
13. Horses in Muddy Fields	*John Cameron*	10
14. Pick-a-Back	*Lesley Grey*	15
15. Lady Ill in Bed	*Ivy Marskell*	13
16. Storm	*L. Gilbert*	15
17. Backs of Houses	*June Gardner*	16
18. Beer Drinkers	*Lorna Comrie*	17
19. Fifth November	*Jennifer Smith*	14
20. Carol Singers	*Robert Paterson*	11
21. Jenny	*Hsiao Ying Chen*	15
22. Foreign Visitors in Oxford	*Ursula Davies*	16
23. The Painting Glass	*Hilda Griggs*	15
24. Landscape	*Monica Collet White*	14
25. Phaeton	*Crispian Woodgate*	9
26. The Room	*Joan Aiken*	15
27. Mother and Father	*Rose Rollason*	12
28. Russian Ballet	*Edith Cartwright*	14
29. Lady In A Veil	*Rosemary Watson*	14
30. Still Life	*Nancy Ewart*	17
31. Painted Writing Patterns	*Joan Fox*	4·6
32. Painted Writing Patterns	*Boy*	6
33. Painted Writing Patterns	*Louise Brimms*	7
34. Painted Writing Patterns	*Girl*	6
35. Painted Writing Patterns	*Violet Wyllie*	9
36. Painted Writing Patterns	*Florence Hyster*	7·1
37. Development of Writing Patterns	*Boy*	7
38. Development of Writing Patterns	*Audrey Cutmore*	9
39. Development of Writing Patterns	*Tom Jarman*	7
40. (*a*) Pre-Writing Scribble	*Ann*	5·4
(*b*) Ink Writing from Printed Passage	*M. Smith*	8
41. (*a*) Ink Writing and Free Border	*Girl*	14
(*b*) Ink Pattern from Copy	*Doreen Murphy*	13
42. Free Compositions with Illustrations	*Helena Tresham*	15

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